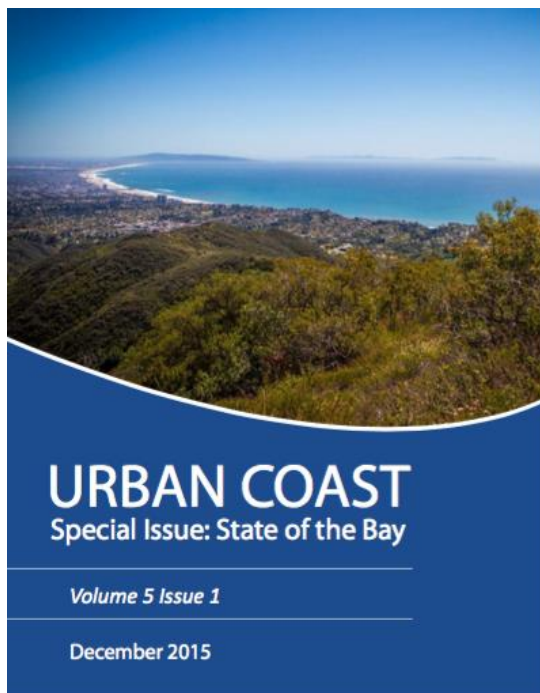


The Bay Foundation (TBF) and the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission (SMBRC) are partners in the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (SMBNEP), one of 28 entities that comprise the National Estuary Program. TBF is a non-profit environmental group founded in 1990 to restore and enhance the Santa Monica Bay and local coastal waters. The SMBRC is a locally-based, non-regulatory state entity which is charged with overseeing and promoting the SMBNEP's Bay Restoration Plan.

Dec 2015-Jan 2016 Edition

'State of the Bay' Report Released on UrbanCoast.org



The *State of the Bay 2015* (SOTB) report, produced by the Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (SMBNEP) over a five-year period, is published and released today for **free** as a special issue of *Urban Coast*: <http://urbancoast.org/>. The *SOTB* report is a science-based comprehensive assessment of the environmental conditions of the Santa Monica Bay and its watershed. The report's primary goals are: to measure progress in restoring the Bay's natural habitats and resources, to educate the public about the Bay's valuable natural resources, and to identify the challenges facing scientists and managers charged with the protection and management of the Bay and its watershed. The 2015 SOTB is the fifth such report published by the SMBNEP since 1993.

The *SOTB 2015* Report celebrates progress in categories such as water resources management and improving habitat conditions as a result of restoration efforts. The report also examines the work still to be done in these areas, and identifies emerging issues we must begin to tackle in the next five years. The report is informed and largely prepared by SMBNEP's Technical Advisory

Committee (TAC), a group of experts in their respective fields, gathered to apply the best available science and management strategies to SMBNEP's restoration work and to the *SOTB* report.

The *SOTB 2015* report includes discussion and articles pertaining to seven habitats—Freshwater Aquatic and Riparian, Coastal Wetlands, Sandy Shores, Rocky Intertidal, Rocky Reefs, Soft-Bottom Benthos, and Coastal Pelagic—with status, trends, and suggested improvement projects.

Prof. Richard Ambrose, UCLA Institute of the Environment and Sustainability and Department of Environmental Health Science, who chaired the TAC, stated, "Thanks to the tremendous efforts of TAC members and many local experts, this *SOTB* report is our clearest view yet of the condition of the natural resources in Santa Monica Bay."

For the complete *State of the Bay 2015* report, please visit <http://urbancoast.org/>. For the press release on the *State of the Bay 2015* report, please click [HERE](#).

SMBRC Governing Board Elects Watershed Advisory Council Members for 2016

At the December meeting, Six [Watershed Advisory Council](#) (WAC) members were [elected](#) to the SMBRC Governing Board for the 2016-2017 period. The WAC is the large, inclusive advisory body to the SMBRC Governing Board with representatives from the public and private sector at the local, regional, state, and federal levels.

The elected members of the WAC are:

At-Large: Resources Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains (represented by Clark Stevens)

At-Large: Marina del Rey Anglers (represented by Robert Godfrey)

At-Large: West Basin Municipal Water District (represented by Director Gloria Gray)

Environment / Public Interest: L.A. Waterkeeper (represented by Bruce Reznik)

Environment / Public Interest: Heal the Bay (represented by Sarah Sikich)

Business Interest: Chevron (represented by Rod Spackman)

Congratulations and thank you for your service to the SMBRC.

How Healthy are SoCal Coastal Wetlands?

In December, the [Regional Monitoring Report for Southern California Coastal Wetlands](#), prepared by The Bay Foundation, California State University Channel Islands, and Southern California Coastal Water Research Project was posted. The U.S. EPA funded this program through a Wetland Program Development Grant, providing TBF and their partners the opportunity for extensive research at six coastal wetland systems in Southern California. This research provided critical baseline data to inform large-scale wetland restoration processes, while leading the efforts to standardize site-intensive research and evaluations of wetlands throughout California.

In addition to the report, the project compiled and analyzed existing wetland assessment procedures, developed proposed standardized approaches in coordination with technical advisors from throughout California, explored the covariance between new site-intensive protocols and existing assessment tools (i.e. California Rapid Assessment Method, or CRAM), and developed standardized protocol documents and training materials to facilitate information transfer to other projects, all culminating in the release of a public, 300-page wetland monitoring manual for California. The effort has been an impressive example of a statewide collaborative effort, with a regional focus on the degraded wetlands of the Southern California Bight, to inform adaptive restoration efforts for these coastal wetland systems.

PV Kelp Forests Show Strong Response to Restoration Efforts

The Bay Foundation with project partners – NOAA, Commercial Sea Urchin Harvesters, Vantuna Research Group and The California Science Center – continue to restore and study kelp forest along the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Since July 2013, 34 acres of urchin barren (nearly 26 football fields) have been cleared of 3.3 million excess purple urchins. Dive teams spent 5,300 hours underwater reducing purple urchin densities from over 28/m² to the target of 2/m² found in healthy kelp forest ecosystems. Additionally, over 880 hours of ecological surveying and site monitoring conducted over the past two years have quantified the efficacy of restoration activities, and highlighted the potential benefits to rocky reef ecosystems.

The year 2 report released last November describes the ecosystem's response to these restoration efforts. Several key metrics include increases in gonadosomatic indexes for red and purple sea urchins, fish species richness, and biomass as indicated by kelp bass and sheephead. These trends describe strong, and in some cases significant, increases in value in response to restoration activities. The values



for red sea urchins entering the fishery at 84 mm in diameter within restoration sites displayed gonadosomatic values roughly 150% greater than the reds collected in the barrens / controls within two years after restoration efforts. Giant kelp, the competitive dominant macroalgae in this system, has also responded favorably, with increases in density of two to three orders of magnitude in Underwater Arch Cove and Honeymoon Cove, respectively. Sub-canopy macroalgae are also responding positively to the reduction in herbivory and abrasion ascribed to the reduction in sea urchin density. The functionality and persistence of these changes will be determined by further monitoring and analyses. In summary, the results are encouraging but are to be considered preliminary. Future efforts will provide a more accurate understanding of the strength and persistence of the ecosystem responses to this work in the coming years.

Girl Scouts Have Fun with Watersheds

On December 1st, Watershed Programs Manager Melodie Grubbs spoke to students at the UCLA Lab School about watersheds, what they do and how they work. Special attention was paid to Stone Canyon Creek, one of the few remaining streams in the area located just outside their door, where some had already volunteered to help restore the formerly-degraded system. Then the girls of Troop 1645 used clay to build their own watershed with topography and elevation changes, and poured water over their creation to see how and where the water flowed into a basin. Here they are, hard at work!



Look for a 'Clean Bay Certified' for Dine L.A.!

For this year's Dine L.A., which runs from Jan. 18-31, please check out our [Clean Bay Certified list of restaurants/bars/eateries](#) across eight cities that are making the extra effort to manage waste and protect the health of the Santa Monica Bay! If you're choosing between a certified and non-certified restaurant, we hope you will support those who have committed to helping...and let them know!

Join TBF Outside

TBF offers regular volunteer opportunities at these locations:

- Culver City Rain Garden
- LAX Dunes
- Malibu Lagoon
- Stone Canyon Creek

Please check <http://www.santamonicabay.org/events/> for dates, times, brief descriptions, and who to contact.

TBF also works with corporations and other organizations for group volunteer days. Please contact Rod Abbott (rabbott@santamonicabay.org) if you'd like to plan such an event.

In The News

December's launch event for the state-of-the-art bilge pumpout and oil-water separator brought out the Oceanside/San Diego media on a blustery day. The [San Diego Union Tribune](#) published a thorough story that appeared on the front page of the Oceanside section of the Sunday paper! The [Osider News](#) also gave the event its due for what it's bringing to the area (they also published a pre-announcement of the event). [KPBS](#) aired a brief interview (with story) with TBF Water Quality Programs Manager Victoria Gambale. And FOX5-TV in San Diego aired a segment on their 6:00pm newscast the day of the press conference (no link available).



Keco Pump & Equipment's Andrew Bleier explains how the new system works. Courtesy of OsiderNews.

Social Media IS Important and Fun!

If you're a social media maven or even a dabbler, we ask that you engage, share and use our Social Media avenues.

Facebook: "[Santa Monica Bay Restoration Foundation](#)"

Twitter: [@SMBRF](#)

Instagram: [@TheBayFoundation](#)

YouTube: "[The Bay Foundation](#)"

*Please go that extra step and invite colleagues, friends and family to also Like or Follow. Watch our FB for "Restaurant Thursdays"

And did you know you can find a Clean Bay Restaurant certified by The Bay Foundation on our site? Check out your local DINING options at <http://www.santamoncabay.org/learn/our-work/clean-bay-restaurants/>

TBF INSTAGRAM PHOTO OF THE MONTH

A new feature! We'll start scouring Instagram pictures that tag @thebayfoundation, and yours may be the one featured!



2016 SMBRC Governing Board Meeting Dates

The SMBRC Governing Board meets on the 3rd Thursday of the even-numbered months from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Del Rey Yacht Club.

The 2016 meeting dates are:

- February 18
- April 21
- June 16
- August 18
- October 20
- December 15

The Del Rey Yacht Club is located at 13900 Palawan Way, Marina del Rey CA 90292.

For additional information concerning any SMBRC Governing Board meeting, please contact Scott Valor at 808-631-6118 or by e-mail at svalor@santamonicabay.org. You may also visit the SMBRC website at www.smbrc.ca.gov.

Check Out Our Websites

Please check out the SMBRC website: www.smbrc.ca.gov. To streamline access to the Governing Board agendas, schedules, and staff reports, the website features only information that is most critical to following the month-to-month activities of the SMBRC's bodies.

The Bay Foundation's website can be viewed at www.santamonicabay.org. It includes links to Foundation activities, reports, and other information.

If you have any questions or comments, contact Scott Valor at svalor@santamonicabay.org or Julie Du Brow at jdubrow@santamonicabay.org.